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SUBJECT: MONGOLIAN PM BAYAR INTRODUCES NEW CABINET TO RESIDENT  
DIPLOMATIC CORPS

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¶1. (SBU) Prime Minister S.Bayar invited the resident diplomatic corps and international-organization representatives to meet his newly installed Cabinet December 17 at Government House. The Czech Ambassador, as dean of the diplomatic corps, began the hour-long event by offering congratulations to Bayar and his new 16-member Cabinet.

¶2. (SBU) Bayar then briefly addressed the group, noting he had laid out his Cabinet's priorities (summarized in para 4) in a speech delivered December 13 to Parliament (the full text has been emailed to EAP/CM). Bayar said he wanted in particular to highlight two of those priorities for his Government. First, the problem of rising inflation needed to be addressed. Second, Mongolia needs to move forward with developing its mineral resources in a way which will benefit Mongolia and the Mongolian people while also offering fair treatment for foreign investors and partners. He added that Mongolia would continue to pursue its own independent foreign policy. Bayar noted that his Cabinet included several teachers, three women (earlier in the morning Bayar had opened a conference on gender issues), and that all had knowledge or previous experience in their assigned portfolios. With the speeches concluded, the line of diplomats proceeded individually to first clink glasses with Bayar and then work their way down the line of assembled Cabinet members. (Post's analysis of the cabinet to follow by septel.)

¶3. (SBU) COMMENT: This swift and orderly method of introductions lies in sharp contrast with the approach used in February 2006 by former PM (and now DPM) Enkhbold. At that time, the diplomatic corps was invited to a reception attended by most but not all of his cabinet. Enkhbold stiffly read his extended speech replete with unspecific, unremarkable generalities, after which cabinet ministers and diplomats milled about making cold introductions. END COMMENT.

¶4. (SBU) In his initial speech to Mongolia's Ikh Hural (Parliament) on December 13, Bayar identified five priorities: the revision of the election system to usher in proportional representation; development of Mongolia's natural resources; improvements in civil registration; bringing inflation under control; and improving efficiency in the delivery of benefits and public services.

MINTON